



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner

September 24, 2013
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Four Arkansas schools named National Blue Ribbon Schools

LITTLE ROCK – The U.S. Department of Education named four Arkansas schools as 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools. The three public schools were Ellen Smith Elementary School in the Conway School District, Bergman Elementary School in the Bergman School District and Central Park-Morning Star Elementary School in the Bentonville School District. Immaculate Conception Catholic School in Fort Smith also was named a National Blue Ribbon School. Immaculate Conception is a private school and was nominated by the Council for American Private Education.

The four Arkansas schools were among 286 schools, 236 public and 50 private, recognized today by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. All received the Exemplary High Performing designation, which means they have Reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics test scores that rank among the top 15 percent in the state.

"We are extremely proud of these high-performing schools in Arkansas that were selected for this national honor," Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell said. "They serve as statewide models of success."

Exemplary Improving Schools, the other possible designation, have at least 40 percent of students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have demonstrated significant improvement on state tests.

The National Award Ceremony for this year's winners will be held Nov. 18 and 19 at the Omi-Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools program began in 1982 as a way to bring public attention to the best schools in the United States and to facilitate communication and sharing of best practices within and among schools. More information can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/index.html>. For a list of Arkansas schools recognized in the past, go to <http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/learning-services/federal-programs/national-blue-ribbon-schools>.

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